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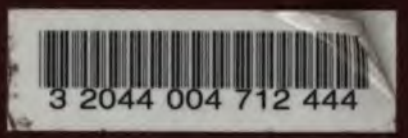

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The Apology of Socrates

Translated, with Introduction, Analysis, and Notes, by D. F. Nevill, M.A., late Exhibitioner of New College, Oxford

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INTRODUCTION

I. The Divine Mission.

The 'Apology' can hardly be described as a technical defence. The charges which it was intended to answer were not directed against any particular act on Socrates' part, but against his whole manner of life. It is, therefore, only natural that he should have treated the indictment as a challenge to him to give a general justification of his life's work. There are many pleas which might serve to justify Socrates before men of all time—his single-hearted love of truth, his fearless opposition to injustice, his earnest desire to improve his fellow-citizens. But the possession of these qualities, although abundantly illustrated in the course of the 'Apology,' is not used by Socrates as a means of self-justification. The point with which he begins, and to which he constantly recurs, is his belief that he was the recipient of a divine injunction to work for the improvement of himself and others. The

god, he says, had appointed him to live as a philosopher, and to question and exhort the Athenian people; and no consideration, neither fear of death nor anything else, should turn him from 'the god's service.' This sacred mission is the real basis and the main plea of Socrates' defence. First he relates how the enthusiast Chærephon went to Delphi and asked the oracle if anyone were wiser than Socrates. The priestess replied that no one was wiser. Then Socrates somewhat curiously concluded that he must vindicate the truth of the oracle. Accordingly, he went to various classes of men in turn, such as statesmen, poets, and artisans, questioning those who were reputed to be wise, and he found that he was at least wiser than they in this—that he was aware of his own ignorance. So he supposed that by 'wisdom' the god meant 'consciousness of ignorance'; and perhaps, Socrates adds, that is, after all, the only wisdom that man can attain. Now, this strange story is Socrates' account of the origin of his missionary labours; and, whether we accept it as a true account or not, it is perfectly consistent with the general tenor of the defence. For the answer of the oracle was not the only divine communication that Socrates received. He assures his judges that he had also been appointed through oracles and dreams and every other medium of divine revelation (32 c). To neglect his work would, he declares, be disobedience to the god (29 A, D). He was

the god's gift (30 E) to the Athenian people, a strange gift coming to them in the shape of a gadfly to rouse them, settling on them all day long, and not allowing them to sleep the sleep of ignorance and dream the dreams of false wisdom. This bare assertion that he was the god's gift might not seem convincing, and the judges would no doubt think that he was joking or pretending (20 D, 37 E). But his actions proved his sincerity. He had opposed the collective trial of the generals (32 B), and had disregarded the unjust commands of the Thirty (32 c). Moreover, he had neglected all his own interests, and had devoted himself to the concerns of his fellow-citizens; and no mere human motive would account for that (31 B). Such is Socrates' proof of his Divine appointment and his justification of his life's work. The nature of the work to which Socrates believed himself to be thus consecrated is clearly brought out in his defence. The Socratic mission was directed against pretentious wisdom. For it was just this confident belief in their own wisdom which made men blind to their essential ignorance. To Socrates ignorance was the root of all evil; and he felt that, if men could become conscious of their ignorance, that at least would be the beginning of wisdom. Hence the end and substance of Socrates' missionary work was to 'examine' men, and, in examining them, to lead them to examine themselves. For he was convinced that

by self-examination they would acquire self-knowledge, and, knowing themselves, would estimate things at their true value. Then they would care less for money and honour and glory, and would care entirely for the good of their souls and for the highest welfare of the State (30 A, 36 C).

II. The Divine Sign.

The divine sign, or voice, which Socrates has occasion to mention in his defence (31 C, 40 A) must be carefully distinguished from those agencies, such as oracles and dreams, which induced him to execute his mission. Socrates nowhere suggests that it was the divine sign which commanded him to teach the Athenian people. On the contrary, he tells us that its function was to check action, and not to prompt it (31 D, 40 B). Hence the divine voice was not the origin of Socrates' missionary work; but, by telling him what he was not to do (as, for example, not to engage in politics), it gave a negative guidance in directing his activity.

The divine voice has sometimes been identified with the voice of conscience; but for two reasons it is safer to avoid this identification: (1) because the function of conscience is not merely negative, (2) because the voice did not tell Socrates what was morally wrong, but what was practically inexpedient. Briefly stated, it appears to have been a sudden intuitive consciousness of the inexpediency of carrying a conceived purpose into effect.

Socrates' frequent mention of the divine sign in public seems to have excited some suspicion on religious grounds, and may have been largely responsible for those counts in the indictment which charged him with 'not believing in the gods of the State and introducing other new divinities.'

III. Socrates in a Civil Capacity.

Socrates assigns three general reasons for his abstention from political life: (1) the opposition of the divine sign (31 D); (2) that the service of the god left him no time for political affairs, (23 B); (3) that, had he engaged in politics, he would long ago have perished without doing any good either to himself or others (31 D). The truth of the last reason is certainly borne out by the circumstances which attended Socrates' one and only venture into political affairs.

In 406 B.C. Socrates was a member of the Senate. In that year the Athenians defeated the Lacedæmonians in a naval battle off the Arginusæ. After the battle the generals neglected to recover the bodies of the dead, and to rescue the living from the disabled ships. The Greeks always regarded the performance of funeral rites as a sacred duty, and when the Athenian people received the news of the battle, they forgot the joy of their victory, and were

filled with the wildest resentment at the misconduct of their generals. While public opinion was thus inflamed, the matter was discussed in the Assembly, and thence referred to the Senate. In the Senate, Callixenus brought forward a proposal to take a collective verdict on the eight commanders. It so happened that on this day Socrates was president of the Senate, and it was his function as president to lay all questions before the Assembly. The proposal to take a collective verdict was illegal, and Socrates declined to put the question. At first his protest received the support of some of his colleagues; but these soon yielded to the shouts and threats of the people, and Socrates was left to face the danger alone. Mindful only of his duty, he stubbornly refused to withdraw his protest, so that ultimately the question was put without his concurrence. The motion was then carried, and those of the generals who had appeared to answer the charges were condemned and executed.

These events occurred before the destruction of the Democracy. Two years later, under the Oligarchy, Socrates appeared again in a civil, though not in an official, capacity in connexion with the seizure of Leon of Salamis. Leon was one of the victims of the reign of terror inaugurated by Critias and The Thirty, whose purpose was to get rid of the persons and confiscate the property of any influential citizens who were likely to be dangerous opponents. In pursuance

of their usual method of implicating unwilling citizens, The Thirty sent for Socrates and four others to come to the government house, and ordered them, with terrible menaces, to bring Leon back as prisoner. Four out of the five obeyed: Socrates boldly disregarded the orders of The Thirty, and returned to his own house.

IV. Socrates as a Soldier.

Three military expeditions in which Socrates took part are mentioned in the 'Apology' (28 E) — Potidæa, Delium, and Amphipolis. Between 432 and 429 B.C. he served before Potidæa, a revolted Athenian dependency, and distinguished himself by the fortitude with which he endured the hardships of the Thracian winter. It was during this siege, also, that he saved the life of Alcibiades, to whom after the battle he resigned the prize awarded for valour. In 424 B.C. the Thebans totally routed the Athenian army at Delium. Socrates and Laches were among the few who did not fly. They retreated together, Socrates maintaining a 'majestic composure, looking calmly both on friend and foe.' Again, in 422 B.C., Socrates distinguished himself at Amphipolis; but there is no record of his achievements.

V. Socrates as Moral Reformer.

'I was never anyone's teacher,' says Socrates (33 A). These words may suggest a paradox to

any who have been accustomed to think of Socrates as one of the greatest teachers that ever lived. But he himself supplies the explanation. 'I merely offer myself,' he says, 'to be asked and to answer questions, and I take no fee for my services (33 A). If the young follow me, they do so of their own accord' (23 C). Socrates means that he was not in any sense a professional teacher. But he means more than this. He had no 'pupils' in the strict sense of the word. He himself was a learner. He did not state his own opinion categorically, but by a series of questions drew admissions from others, and the ideas of both the questioner and the person questioned were recast and defined in the process. This was indeed teaching; for the efficacy of the process depended on the nature of the questions asked. But it was not the teaching which the Athenians generally would associate with the word 'teacher.' Socrates delighted in thus posing as a fellow-inquirer; that attitude brought him into closer sympathy with a friendly interlocutor, and also gave him better facility for indulging his irony against those who were hostile or contemptuous.

There is another sense in which we can accept Socrates' assertion that he was not a teacher. He is known to us now, not so much as the exponent of particular doctrines, but much more as one who worked with great constancy and earnestness for the improvement of his fellow-

men—in short, as a moral reformer. The chief instrument of Socrates' work of moral reformation was the method of examination. This Socratic examination (conducted by question and answer, as illustrated by the dialogues) is in reality the first conscious employment of the inductive method, its purpose being to get at clear and definite general ideas by a process of elimination. The acquisition of these clear general ideas is what Socrates understands by 'knowledge.' And inasmuch as knowledge and virtue are, according to Socrates, identical, it is easy to see the bearing of the Socratic method on his work as a reformer. To Socrates the excellence of a man's soul is all-important (32 D). But such excellence can only be obtained by 'examining' one's self, and thus acquiring clear general ideas—in short, knowledge. One who has knowledge of good will not voluntarily choose evil. Hence, 'an unexamined life is not worth living' (38 A). For it is a life without knowledge, and therefore without virtue—without the one thing which is really important.

VI. The Sophists.

The class of professional teachers known as the Sophists first appeared in Greece at about the time of Socrates' childhood. But the name 'sophist' had already existed for some time to denote a person — not necessarily a teacher —

who by profession practised some kind of wisdom or cleverness, such as music or philosophy. The use of the word was at all times somewhat vague; but within a few years of Socrates' trial its application had been very generally restricted to the paid professional teachers. Gorgias, Prodicus and Hippias, to whom Socrates alludes (19 E), were Sophists in this sense, and among the most eminent teachers of the period. Gorgias and others appear to have confined their teaching to rhetoric; but generally the instructions of the Sophists were various, including such subjects as ethics, rhetoric, pleading, music and physical science. Their teaching was mainly practical, intended to prepare young men for the Assembly or the law-courts. They went from city to city (19 E), giving courses of lectures and attracting pupils by exhibitions of their skill. They took fees for their services, and, although the majority were doubtless ill paid, we hear that leading members of the profession made considerable sums. Of the merits of their teaching it is difficult to speak with precision. In the lower grades of the profession there were no doubt many quacks and charlatans, who well deserved the ridicule which Aristophanes lavished on 'professors' in general. But the teaching of the more refined was not without value. For example, they undoubtedly gave an impulse to 'style' and the accurate use of words. On the other hand, they showed a tendency to over-

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animosity by the general manner of his life. It was not altogether an unnatural result that he should have made himself odious (21 D) by constantly pestering people with questions (37 C), apparently for the sole purpose of proving them to be ignorant. He candidly tells the court (23 A) how grievous was the hatred which he thus incurred; and when young men, with no special qualification, began to imitate him, we cannot wonder that public feeling fixed itself on the master. The whole of Socrates' defence is virtually an answer to the prejudice thus excited; it is a justification of his life's work. 'I may have been a nuisance,' he says in effect, 'but it was the god that sent me to be a nuisance (30 E), and nothing will induce me to disobey him.'

VIII. The Trial.

The form of the indictment preferred against Socrates is given in his speech (24 B). The trial was an *ἀγὼν τιμητός*—that is, a trial in which the penalty was not fixed beforehand by law, but was determined by the court. The time assigned for the trial was divided into three equal lengths thus: (1) the speech of the prosecutors, (2) the defence of the accused, (3) the assessment of the penalty.

In the 'Apology' we are of course concerned with the second and third time-lengths only;

and the main part (17 A—33 E) is evidently in the second length. Between this and the third length follows the taking of the votes of the judges and the announcement of the result. The third length then begins; the prosecutor speaks again, this time in favour of the penalty which he has named in the indictment, and the accused replies (35 E—38 C) in mitigation of the penalty proposed. Finally the judges vote on the amount of the penalty and the result is declared. Here ordinarily the trial would end; but Socrates appears (38 C) to have addressed the court after the trial had formally concluded.

The 'Apology' falls into three parts: (1) 17 A—35 D, the Defence; (2) 35 E—38 C, the Antitimesis, or speech in mitigation of the penalty; (3) 38 C—42 A, the Concluding Address.

ANALYSIS OF THE 'APOLOGY' OF SOCRATES.

A. The Defence.

1. *Opening Words* (17 A).—I am no orator. But you, as judges, have only to consider whether or not I speak the truth.

2. *The First Accusers: Statement and Defence* (18 A).—My accusers are twofold: (*a*) Those who have prejudiced you against me; (*b*) the prosecutors. The first are the more dangerous, because they are so numerous and have accused me for so long, and because none of them, except a certain comedy-writer, can be named. It is difficult to fight such shadowy enemies as envy and slander. But I must deal with them as best I can. Their charges are these: (*a*) That I am a natural philosopher; (*b*) that I make the worse appear the better cause. Now, as you know, I have nothing to do with physical research. And as for sophistry and teaching for a fee,—if I could, like Evenus, get a fee for teaching virtue, I should be only too proud. Why, then, am I disliked? Because I am wise. At any rate, the Delphic oracle told Chærephon that I was the wisest of men. So, to prove the oracle true, I began to cross-examine those

reputed wise, such as statesmen, poets and artisans; and I found that, whereas I knew that I was ignorant, these men were wise in their own esteem and did not know their ignorance. I suppose that this consciousness of ignorance is what the god meant by wisdom. Anyhow, I am called 'wise,' and am hated accordingly. I am still doing the god's will, and have no time for politics or money-making. And because the young men imitate me I am now accused of corrupting them, and the general prejudice has led to my prosecution.

3. *The Second Accusers: Statement and Defence* (24 B).—Meletus accuses me of (*a*) corrupting the young, (*b*) not believing in the gods of the State, (*c*) introducing strange gods. Now, Meletus can never have thought or cared about the young, or he would not say that one man alone corrupts them. On the contrary, it is the one man who improves them, just as it is the one man, the trainer, who improves horses and other animals, whereas others corrupt them. Besides, I should only injure myself by corrupting my companions, and no one intentionally injures himself. So that, if I corrupt the young, I do it unintentionally, and you should point out to me my mistake, instead of threatening me with punishment. And now, Meletus, what do you mean in this charge about the gods? You mean that I teach atheism. But how can I be an atheist, if, as your indictment states, I believe

in divinities? One who believes in children must believe in parents; and divinities are either gods or the children of gods. Therefore, in any case, I believe in gods.

4. *General Defence* (28 A).—It is easy enough to answer the indictment; but prejudice may still convict me, as it has convicted many others before me. Why should I be ashamed of conduct which exposes me to danger? Achilles feared dishonour, but not death. I did not quit the post assigned to me by my commanders at Potidæa, Delium and Amphipolis. Much less can I now disobey my divine commander, the god of Delphi. If I feared death, I should be pretending to be wise in knowing, what no one knows, whether death is good or evil. This I know,—that disobedience is dishonourable. And that is why I cannot agree to give up my work of exhortation even if you should in return agree to acquit me. Death, banishment and public disgrace are not misfortunes. The one misfortune is injustice; and if you deal unjustly with me, you will be the losers. You will lose a divine gift, one who has been sent by the god as a gadfly to rouse you. My superhuman neglect of my own interests, and my poverty, sufficiently prove that I am such a gift. You may think it strange that I do not venture to carry my teaching into political affairs. But a certain divine voice, which has always attended me, has warned me not to engage in politics; and, had it not

done so, I should long ago have perished in attempting to restrain you from unjust actions. Even my own small experience of public life proves this; for I was in danger of death (*a*) when I opposed the collective trial of the generals, (*b*) when I refused to bring Leon from Salamis. I have never yielded to injustice. Nor have I ever been anyone's teacher. But I have offered myself freely and without fee to those who wished to hear me; and, if any of these have turned out badly, it is no fault of mine. Men like to hear me, because I expose the ignorance of those who think themselves wise. And I do this work because the god has, in every possible way, appointed me to do it. If I had really corrupted the young, they or their relations, instead of coming to my help, would have done their best to have me punished.

5. *Concluding Remarks* (34 D).—Do not be annoyed if I disdain to bring my children here to excite your pity. Such performances would be derogatory to me and disgraceful to you. If I were to implore a judge to dispense justice by favour, and thus to break his oath to the gods, I should stand self-convicted of atheism.

[Verdict returned.]

B. The Counter-Assessment.

(35 E) I am not surprised at the verdict. What surprises me is that I am condemned by so small a majority. Meletus assessed the penalty

at death. What counter-assessment shall I make? I assess the penalty at what I deserve—maintenance in the Prytaneum. Perhaps you think this presumptuous, and that I ought to propose something evil. Death may not be an evil. So what punishment shall I suggest? To live in prison as a slave to The Eleven? Or to pay a fine—which to me, who cannot pay, also means imprisonment? Or to be banished to another country and to other citizens, who, like you, will find my pursuits intolerable, and will drive me out? Or shall my penalty be to keep silence? No; the god has appointed me to examine myself and others, and I cannot and will not disobey him. If I suggest a fine, I can only pay one mina; but Plato and others here say that they will be sureties for thirty minæ. A fine of thirty minæ is what I propose.

[Sentence passed.]

C. The Concluding Address.

1. *To the Condemning Judges* (38 C).—You have made a bad bargain. At most you have gained a few years of my life, and for this you will have to pay a heavy price in reproach. I have been convicted, not, as you may think, through lack of arguments, but through lack of willingness to stoop to supplication. Unworthy devices are not justified by danger of death either in the battle-field or the law-court. It is harder to escape wickedness than to escape

death. You condemn me to death; truth condemns you to wickedness. Now, I prophesy that after my death vengeance will overtake you. For then others, whom I have hitherto restrained, will make you give an account of your lives. Your only course is to make yourselves fit for an ordeal which you cannot escape by putting men to death

2. *To the Acquitting Judges* (39 E).—The divine voice has always checked me when about to do or say anything inexpedient, but to-day it has not checked me at all. I take this as a sign that my condemnation is not an evil for me. Besides, death is either a dreamless sleep or a migration of the soul. If it is the former, I count it gain; and if the latter, what greater blessing could there be than to meet the true judges in Hades, and to converse with and examine those who were great and just in their lives, or those who died through an unjust sentence? Therefore, I and you, my judges, should be of good cheer in face of death, remembering that there is no evil for a good man and that he is never neglected by the gods. I feel that even now the gods are doing what is best for me. One thing I ask,—deal with my sons as I have dealt with you, and reproach them if they care for anything rather than for virtue. Thus I shall have received justice at your hands. Now you and I must part; the god alone knows which of us will meet the better lot.

THE APOLOGY OF SOCRATES

I. How you, men of Athens, have been influenced by my accusers, I know not; I (at any rate) even myself almost forgot my own case[1] in listening to them; so persuasively did they speak. And yet not a word, as I may say, of truth have they uttered. But of the many false statements which they made I was particularly amazed at one,—that in which they said that you must take care not to be deceived by me, for I was clever at speaking. For the fact that they were not ashamed that they would at once be refuted [2]practically, when I should appear not in the least clever at speaking,—this seemed to me to be the most shameless thing in them; unless of course they call the man who speaks the truth a clever speaker; for if this is what they mean, I indeed would confess that I am an orator, [3]but not after their style. Well, as I say, these 17 A 17 B

[1] ὑπ' αὐτῶν: lit. 'by them,' 'under their influence.'
[2] ἔργῳ: lit. 'in deed.'
[3] οὐ κατὰ τοῦτους = 'not according to these,' *i.e.*, an orator not of their stamp, but superior to them.

have uttered little or nothing that is true; but from me you shall hear the whole truth. But, by Zeus, men of Athens, not [1]a speech finely decked out, as theirs was, [2]with expressions and
C words nor a prepared speech, but you will hear things spoken at random in the first words that occur; for I believe that what I say is just, and let none of you expect otherwise; indeed it would not, [3]I suppose, be seemly for me at my age to come before you like a lad [4]fabricating a story.

And I must most earnestly, men of Athens, beg and entreat this of you; if you hear me making my defence in the same language as I am wont to use both in the market [5]at the counters, where many of you have heard me,
17 D and elsewhere, not to be surprised nor to interrupt on this account. For the truth is this. This is the first time that [6]I have come before a court, though I am seventy years of age; I

[1] λόγους is object of ἀκούσεσθε understood.

[2] ῥήμασί τε καὶ ὀνόμασιν is a phrase which would probably be familiar to those of Socrates' audience who were conversant with rhetoric. ῥήματα appear to have been complete expressions, as distinguished from ὀνόματα, or single words.

[3] Δήπου = 'I suppose,' 'I presume,' 'of course.'

[4] πλάττοντι λόγους = 'fashioning speeches,' with intent to deceive.

[5] ἐπὶ τῶν τραπεζῶν: *i.e.*, the money-changers' tables, which were a favourite resort of the richer class.

[6] ἀναβέβηκα. This verb (ἀναβαίνω) and another compound of ἀνά, 'up' (ἀναβιβάζομαι), occur several times; the preposition 'up' refers to the raised platform, or βῆμα, from which the speeches were delivered.

am therefore literally a stranger to your manner of speech here. And so, just as, supposing I happened actually to be a stranger, you would, I presume, forgive my speaking in the language and the fashion in which I had been brought 18 A
up, so also now I beg this of you as what, in my opinion, is just, that you pass over the manner of my speech,—for it might perhaps be worse or perhaps better,—but consider this point and to this give your attention, whether I say what is just or not; for this is the virtue of a judge, but an orator's virtue is to speak the truth.

II. First, then, [1]it is right that I should make my defence, men of Athens, against the first [false] charges brought against me and [2]my first accusers, and then against the later charges and the later accusers. For many have arisen. 18 B
accusing me to you even of old, talking now for many years and saying nothing true. And I am more afraid of them than of [3]Anytus and his friends, though these too are dangerous. But, men of Athens, still more dangerous are

[1] δίκαιός εἰμι: lit. 'I am right to.'

[2] πρώτους... ὑστέρους. The first accusers are those who have excited prejudice against Socrates; the later accusers are the prosecutors Anytus, Meletus and Lycon.

[3] τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ἄνυτον: lit. 'those round Anytus,' *i.e.*, Anytus and his friends Meletus and Lycon. Anytus was by far the most important of the three accusers. He had acquired some wealth as a leather-seller, but had suffered at the hands of The Thirty, who had confiscated his estates. His exertions and sufferings in the democratic cause made him a popular favourite.

those who [1]taking most of you in hand from your childhood [2]were more successful both in persuading you and in accusing me of nothing true, saying that there is one Socrates, [3]a wise man, [4]one who both speculates about the heavens and who has inquired into everything [5]beneath the earth and [6]who makes the worse
d appear the better cause. These, men of Athens, who have scattered abroad this rumour, are my dangerous accusers; for their hearers think that those who make these inquiries do not believe in the gods either. And then these accusers are many and have now been accusing me for a long time, and were moreover speaking to you at that time of life at which you would have most readily believed them, when you were children, and some of you too were youths, literally prosecuting [7]a suit given by default, where no one

[1] παραλαμβάνοντες is the usual word for taking pupils in hand.

[2] ἔπειθόν τε ... μᾶλλον: lit. 'persuaded you and accused me the more.'

[3] σοφὸς ἀνήρ. As applied to Sophists and philosophers, the word *σοφός* was often a term of contempt. *Cf.* 23 A.

[4] μετέωρα φροντιστής is an echo of Aristophanes' *μεριμνοφροντισταί* ('Clouds,' 101). *φροντιστής* here takes an accusative, as equivalent to a verb.

[5] τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς. Socrates appears to have studied natural science in his youth, but to have soon abandoned it as futile. *Cf.* τὰ κατὰ γῆς in Aristophanes' 'Clouds,' 188.

[6] τὸν ἥττω, κ.τ.λ. This was a stock accusation against the Sophists, and is strongly urged against Socrates in the 'Clouds.' See Introduction, VII.

[7] ἐρήμην: *i.e.*, δίκην, the technical term for a suit which went by default through the non-appearance of one of the parties.

appeared for the defence. But the most unreasonable thing of all is that one cannot even know and mention the names of any of them, except [1]one who happens to be [2]a writer of 18 B
comedies. But all who employing spite and slander used to persuade you, some of them persuading others after having also been themselves persuaded, these are all most difficult to deal with; for it is not possible [3]to call one of them here or to cross-examine him, but it is necessary literally, as it were, to fight with shadows, both making my defence and putting my questions whilst no one answers. Do you also then assume that, as I say, my accusers have been of two kinds, firstly those who have recently accused me, and secondly those who accused me long ago, of whom I am 18 E
speaking. And believe that I ought first to defend myself against [4]those; for you also heard them accusing me earlier and much more often than these later accusers.

Very well; I must indeed make my defence

[1] εἴ τις = Latin *si quis*, and may often be conveniently translated 'any one who.'

[2] κωμῳδιοποιός. Ameipsias and Eupolis had satirized Socrates; but here no doubt Aristophanes is chiefly meant. The 'Clouds' appeared twenty-four years before the date of this trial.

[3] ἀναβιβάσασθαι: lit. 'to cause to go up,' *i.e.*, to mount the *βῆμα*. It is a technical word for calling a witness to the bar of the court.

[4] ἐκείνους: *i.e.*, τοὺς πάλαι, the old, or first, accusers.

19 A and try to remove from your minds in so short a time this prejudice which you in so long a time conceived. Now I should wish that this might so befall, if it should be in aught better for both you and me, and that I should gain some benefit in making my defence; but I think that my task is difficult, and its nature does not altogether escape me. Nevertheless let the result go as the god wills, but I must obey the law and make my defence.

III. Let us then resume from the beginning and see what is the charge, out of which the prejudice against me has arisen, [1]on which of
19 B course [2]Meletus relied, when he preferred this [3]indictment against me. Well, what did the slanderers really say, when they slandered me?

[1] ᾧ δὴ καὶ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'on which of course relying Meletus preferred this indictment against me.' In Greek the main idea is often contained in the participial clause. In English we must generally reverse the construction.

[2] Μέλητός. Meletus figures formally as the chief prosecutor, Anytus and Lycon being merely associated with him as *συνήγοροι*. Hence it is Meletus on whom Socrates calls to explain the meaning of the indictment (24 B); and, again, it is Meletus who is asked why he did not bring witnesses (34 A), and Meletus who would have been fined, if the prosecution had failed to obtain the one-fifth of the votes (36 A). Socrates represents him as taking up the case for the poets (23 E), and refers to him as a comparatively young man (25 D). We may suppose that he was a young tragic poet. Beyond this nothing certain is known about him.

[3] γραφήν. γραφή is a criminal prosecution, as opposed to δίκη, a civil action.

I must read their deposition [1]as if they were formal accusers. 'Socrates is an evil-doer and is overbusy investigating what is under the earth and what is in heaven and making the worse appear the better cause and teaching others these same things.' It is something like 19 C that; for you saw this yourselves in the comedy of Aristophanes, you saw there a man called Socrates swinging about saying that he walked on air and talking a great deal of nonsense besides about matters of which I know nothing either great or small. [2]And I do not speak as disparaging that kind of knowledge, if anyone is wise about such things. May I never be prosecuted by Meletus upon [3]so many charges; [4]but the truth is, men of Athens, I have nothing to do with these matters. And as witnesses I call the 19 D majority of you yourselves, and request you to inform and tell one another, all you who have

[1] ἀντωμοσίαν. Before a trial there was a preliminary inquiry (*ἀνάκρισις*), at which the prosecutor and the defendant both presented sworn statements in writing. The prosecutor's statement would be the *ἔγκλημα*, or indictment; the defendant's plea would be the *ἀντωμοσία* or the *ἀντιγραφή* (27 C). But the meaning of the latter words seems to have been extended loosely (as here), to cover the statement of either the prosecutor or defendant.

[2] καὶ οὐχ, κ.τ.λ. This is ironical; in reality Socrates strongly condemned such studies.

[3] τοσαύτας: *i.e.*, the charges contained in the indictment plus the additional charge of speaking about matters of which he was ignorant, *e.g.* physical science.

[4] ἀλλὰ γάρ = 'but in point of fact.'

ever yet heard me conversing; [1]and there are many of you who have. Then tell one another if any of you ever yet heard me in anything small or great conversing about such matters; and from this you will learn that all the other things too which people say about me are of this kind.

IV. But as a matter of fact none of this is so, nor yet, if you have heard anyone say that I try
19 B to educate men and [2]demand payment, is this true either. Although this too seems to me to be a fine thing, if anyone could educate men, as do both [3]Gorgias of Leontini and [4]Prodicus of Ceos and [5]Hippias of Elis. For each of these,

[1] πολλοὶ δέ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'and there are many such of you.'

[2] χρήματα πράττεσθαι. *Cf.* 31 B and 33 A. This is one of the charges of Aristophanes in the 'Clouds,' and completes his identification of Socrates with the Sophists. In reality Socrates strongly objected to teaching virtue for money.

[3] Γοργίας. Gorgias of Leontini, in Sicily, had settled in Athens about twenty-five years before the date of this trial, and delivered lectures there and in other Greek towns. He is said to have made greater profits than any other man in the profession. He confined his teaching almost exclusively to rhetoric, of which he was considered to be a great master. On Gorgias and the Sophists generally, see Introduction, VI.

[4] Πρόδικος. Prodicus was a native of the island of Ceos. He is best known as the author of the rhetorical allegory called 'The Choice of Hercules.' He made a special study of synonymous words and phrases. He was a most popular teacher and charged high fees.

[5] Ἱππίας. Hippias was one of the most learned of the Sophists, and seems to have had an extensive knowledge in various branches both of erudition and handicraft. Hippias and Prodicus were contemporaries and junior to Gorgias.

men of Athens, [1]is able] going to each of the cities to persuade the young, who are at liberty to associate without fee with whomsoever of their own citizens they may wish,—they persuade these to leave the schools of those men and 20
associate with themselves paying fees, and to feel gratitude [2]besides. For that matter there is also another [3]wise man here, one from Paros, who I heard was staying in the city; for I happened to meet a man who has spent more money on sophists than everyone else put together, I mean [4]Callias the son of Hipponicus. So I asked him,—he has two sons,—'Callias,' said I, 'if your sons had been foals or calves, we could have got and hired a trainer for them who might have made them beautiful and good in their proper excellence. And this person 20
would have been either one of those who understand horses, or of those skilled in farming; but, as it is, since they are men, whom are you minded to get as a trainer for them? Who is skilled in this kind of excellence, that of a man

[1] [οἷός τ' ἐστὶν]. If this is retained in the text, we should expect an infinitive, *i.e.*, πείθειν, to follow. Instead of this, the sentence is broken after βούλονται, and resumed with a finite construction.

[2] προσαδίνας. The προσ- = 'in addition.'

[3] ἀνήρ ... Πάριος: *i.e.*, Evenus, named below. He seems to have attained some distinction as a rhetorician and a poet.

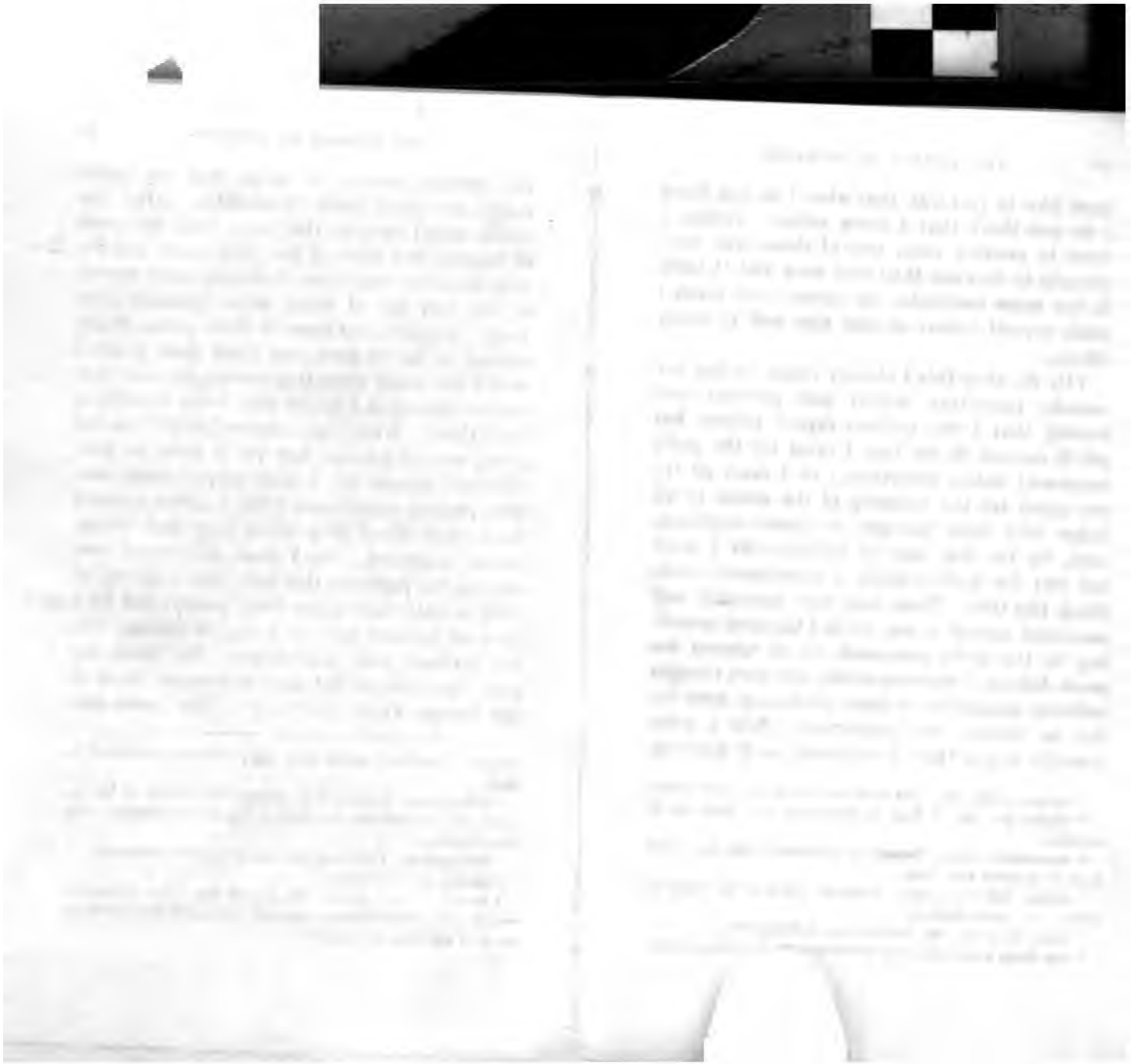
[4] Καλλίᾳ. Callias, 'the wealthy,' was a great patron of the Sophists. He was said to be the richest man in Athens; but he was also very extravagant, and he died in poverty.

than him in just this, that what I do not know I do not think that I know either. Thence I went to another man, one of those who were thought to be wiser than that man and [1]I came
e to the same conclusion as before; and there I made myself odious to him also and to many others.

VII. So after this I already began [2]going my rounds, perceiving indeed and grieving and fearing that I was making myself odious, but yet it seemed to me that I must set the god's command before everything; so I must go [3]in my quest for the meaning of the oracle to all those who were thought to know anything.
a And, by the dog, men of Athens,—for I must tell you the truth,—verily I experienced something like this. Those who were especially well esteemed seemed to me, while I inquired according to the god's command, to be [4]almost the most deficient; whereas others, who were thought inferior, seemed to be more promising men [5]as far as wisdom was concerned. Now I must describe to you [6]how I wandered, as if performing certain labours, in order that my oracle might be made quite [1]irrefutable. After the public men I went to the poets, both the poets of tragedy and those of the [2]dithyramb and the 22 b
rest, thinking that there I should catch myself in the very act of being more ignorant than they. So taking up those of their poems which seemed to me to have cost them most pains, I would ask them what they meant, in order that at the same time I might also learn something from them. Well, I am ashamed to tell you the truth, men of Athens; but yet it must be told. In short almost all, I may say, of those who were present would have given a better account than [3]they about that which they had [4]themselves composed. So I soon discovered concerning the poets too this fact, that it is not by wisdom that they make their poetry, but by a 22 c
kind of instinct and by being in ecstasy, like the diviners and soothsayers. For these say many fine things, but they understand none of the things which they say. The poets also

[1] καί μοι, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'and these same things appeared to me.'
[2] ἐφεξῆς ἰών: lit. 'I went in succession,' *i.e.*, from one to another.
[3] σκοπούντι: dative, because in agreement with *μοί*, which is to be supplied with *ἰόντι*.
[4] ὀλίγου δεῖν = 'almost.' πλείστου ἐνδεεῖς = 'in want of most,' *i.e.*, 'most deficient.'
[5] πρὸς τὸ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'with a view to being wise.'
[6] τὴν ἐμὴν, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'my wandering, as labouring certain labours.' πονοῦντος agrees with *ἐμοί*, which is contained in *ἐμήν*.

[1] ἀνέλεγκτος. Socrates here declares the motive of his inquiry, viz. to vindicate the truth of the oracular answer. See Introduction, I.
[2] διθυράμβων. The dithyramb was a hymn to Dionysus.
[3] αὐτῶν: *i.e.*, the poets.
[4] αὑτοί: *i.e.*, the poets. We should say, 'The bystanders would have given a better account of the poetry than those by whom it had been composed.'



appeared to me to be in some such state as this. And at the same time I perceived that because of their poetry they fancied themselves to be the wisest of men in everything else also, which they were not. So I departed from them too, thinking that I had prevailed over them in the same particular as over the public men.

VIII. Then finally I went to the artisans; for I was conscious that I had, I may say, no know-
22 D ledge, but I knew that I should find that these at any rate had knowledge of many fine things. And in this I was not deceived, for they knew what I did not know, and in this way were wiser than I. But, men of Athens, the good craftsmen as well seemed to me to have the same defect as the poets; each, because he executed his art well, claimed to be most wise in all other, even the highest, matters, and this failing of theirs threw into the shade [1]that wisdom; so
22 E that I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I should choose to be as I am, being neither at all wise in their wisdom nor ignorant in their ignorance, or to have, what they have, both. So I answered myself and the oracle that it was better for me to be as I am.

IX. From this investigation then, men of Athens, have resulted for me many enmities
23 A and such as are most harsh and grievous, so that many slanders have sprung from them and

[1] ἐκείνην: *i.e.*, the wisdom just mentioned,—their skill as craftsmen.

I am called by this name, [1]that I am wise. For those who are present always imagine that I am wise myself in that in which I refute another; [2]whereas the fact probably is, men of Athens, that it is really the god who is wise, and by this oracle means this, that the wisdom of man is worth little or nothing; and he appears not to say this of Socrates, but to have made use of my name, making me an example, as though he would say, 'Mortals, that man of you is wisest, 23 B who, like Socrates, has discovered that in truth with regard to wisdom he is worth nothing.' As to this then I am still even now going round and searching and examining according to the god's command anyone, be he citizen or stranger, whom I may imagine to be wise; and when he does not appear so to me, I support the god and show that he is not wise. [3]And by this occupation I have been left no time to take any part worth mentioning either in the affairs of the State or my private concerns, but am in extreme 23 C poverty through my service to the god.

X. And in addition to this the young men, who most have leisure, the sons of the most wealthy, following me [4]of their own accord,

[1] σοφὸς. *Cf.* 18 B, *σοφὸς ἀνήρ.*

[2] τὸ δέ = 'but the fact is.'

[3] καὶ ὑπὸ ταύτης, κ.τ.λ. Elsewhere (31 C) Socrates assigns the warning of the divine voice as his reason for abstaining from politics. See Introduction, III.

[4] αὐτόματοι. Socrates was not formally their teacher; those who listened to him were not put into his charge by their

delight in hearing men being examined and themselves often imitate me and so try to examine others; and then, I fancy, they find a great abundance of men who think they know something, but who know little or nothing. Consequently those who are examined by them are angry [1]not with themselves, but with me,
23 D and say that a person called Socrates is most objectionable and corrupts the young. And whenever anyone asks them, by doing what and by teaching what, they have nothing to say, and do not know, but in order that they may not appear to be at a loss, they utter these [2]stock charges against all who are philosophers, that they investigate the things in the air and the things under the earth and do not believe in gods and make the worse appear the better cause. For, I fancy, they would not care to tell the truth, which is that they are convicted of pretending to know, when they know nothing. And so inasmuch as they are, I think, ambitious
23 E and vehement and numerous [3]and are well drilled and plausible in what they say about me, they have filled your ears, slandering me

parents or guardians, they came to him 'of their own accord.' *Cf.* 33 A, Introduction, V.

[1] **ἐμοὶ ... ἀλλ' οὐχ αὑτοῖς**: lit. 'with me, but not with themselves.'

[2] **πρόχειρα** = 'ready to hand,' *i.e.*, stock charges. See Introduction, VII.

[3] **καὶ ξυντεταγμένως, κ.τ.λ.**: lit. 'and speaking in a well-arrayed and persuasive fashion.'

both long and fiercely. As a result of this also Meletus attacked me and Anytus and Lycon, Meletus being aggrieved for the poets, and Anytus for the [1]craftsmen and the public men, and Lycon for the rhetoricians. So that, as I 24 A
said at the beginning, I should be surprised if I could in such a short time remove this prejudice from you, so strong has it grown. [2]In this, men of Athens, you have the truth and I speak without concealing from you anything great or small and without [3]dissembling. And yet I know well enough that it is [4]for this same reason that I am disliked. Which is also a proof that I speak the truth and that the prejudice against me is this and that its causes are these. And whether you investigate this now or hereafter, you will 24 B
find that it is so.

XI. With regard then to the accusations of my first accusers let this be a sufficient defence before you; but against Meletus the good and the patriotic, as he calls himself, and my later accusers, I will try to make my defence next. Again then, as if these were a second set of accusers, let us take up their deposition. It is something like this; it says that Socrates is an

[1] **δημιουργῶν.** As a leather-seller, Anytus might be said to represent the artisan class.

[2] **ταῦτ' ἔστιν, κ.τ.λ.**: lit. 'This is the truth for you.'

[3] **ὑποστειλάμενος** is perhaps a nautical metaphor meaning, 'having furled my sails.'

[4] **τοῖς αὐτοῖς**: *i.e.*, my plain-speaking.

bring those who need [1]not instruction, but punishment.

XIV. But in fact, men of Athens, that which
6 B I said is already apparent, that Meletus never yet took any interest either great or small in these matters. But yet, Meletus, do tell us, in what way do you say that I corrupt the younger men? Or rather, is it not clear that according to the indictment, which you preferred, [2]I do so by teaching them not to believe in the gods in whom the State believes, but in other new divinities? Do you not mean that I corrupt them by teaching this? 'Yes, most decidedly I mean that.' Then, Meletus, by these very gods, of whom the question now is, speak still more clearly both to me and to the judges here.
26 C [3]For I cannot understand whether you mean that I teach men to believe that there are some gods, and therefore myself believe that there are gods and am not altogether an atheist and do not offend in this respect, not however those at any rate in whom the State believes, but others, and that it is this with which you charge

[1] κολάσεως, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'punishment, but not instruction.'

[2] διδάσκοντα = 'by teaching,' *i.e.*, you say that I corrupt them by teaching.

[3] ἐγὼ γάρ, κ.τ.λ. Socrates affects to be puzzled by the terms of the indictment, and draws from Meletus the admission that 'not believing in the gods of the State' is equivalent to 'not believing in gods at all.' Socrates then proceeds to expose the inconsistency of charging a downright atheist with 'introducing strange gods.'

me, that I teach belief in others; or whether you say that I both absolutely disbelieve in gods myself and teach this to everyone else.] 'I say this, that you entirely disbelieve in gods?' O wonderful Meletus, wherefore do you say this? Do I not even believe, like everyone else, that 26 D the sun and moon are gods? 'No, by Zeus, judges, for he says that the sun is a stone and the moon earth.' My dear Meletus, do you imagine that you are accusing [1]Anaxagoras, and have you such a contempt for the judges, and do you think them so ignorant of letters, as not to know that the books of Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ are full of these [2]assertions? [3]And what is more the young learn from me those things which they are [4]sometimes at liberty to buy for a drachma, at most, from the orchestra, 26 E and then to laugh at Socrates, if he pretends

[1] Ἀναξαγόρου. Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ (born about 500 B.C.) came to Athens, where he devoted himself to philosophy, and became the friend of many eminent men, especially Pericles and Euripides. His most noteworthy doctrine was that Intelligence (νοῦς) is the fundamental principle of the universe. His theories, however, appear to have been mainly physical. The enemies of Pericles indicted Anaxagoras for atheism; he was banished from Athens, and died in exile.

[2] λόγων: *i.e.*, such assertions as that the sun is a stone and the moon earth.

[3] καὶ δὴ καί is ironical. The sense is, 'Do you suppose that I teach the young doctrines which they can hear from the orchestra in the choruses of some of our plays?' *e.g.* those of Euripides.

[4] ἐνίοτε = 'sometimes,' *i.e.*, when the dramas of Euripides, or another disciple of Anaxagoras, are being performed.

that they are his own, especially as they are so [1]peculiar. But, by Zeus, [2]is this your opinion of me,—that I do not believe in the existence of any god? 'Indeed, by Zeus, you do not, not in the least.' You are incredible, Meletus, and that too, as I think, even to yourself. For this man appears to me, men of Athens, to be an utterly insolent and wanton person, and literally to have preferred this indictment with a kind of insolence and wantonness and youthful petu-
27 A lance. He is like one making trial of us, putting together a sort of riddle, 'Will that wise man Socrates find out that I am jesting and contradicting myself, or shall I deceive him and the rest of my hearers?' For this man appears to me to be contradicting himself in his indictment, as if he were to say, 'Socrates is an evil-doer, who does not believe in gods, but believes in gods.' Yet [3]this is mere trifling.

XV. Help me now to consider, men of Athens, how he appears to me to mean this; but do you, Meletus, answer us. And you, men of Athens,
27 B as I requested you at the beginning, pray

[1] ἄτοπα means not 'ridiculous,' but 'uncommon' or 'peculiar.' Socrates says that it would be palpably foolish to appropriate to himself theories which were so well known, (1) because so easy to procure, (2) because so uncommon and peculiar.

[2] οὕτωσί σοι δοκῶ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'Do I seem to you thus, namely, that I do not believe that there is any god?'

[3] τοῦτό ἐστι παίζοντος: lit. 'this is (the conduct) of one who is trifling.'

remember not to interrupt, if I conduct my speech in [1]my customary manner. Is there anyone amongst men, Meletus, who believes that there are human things, but does not believe that there are human beings? He must answer, men of Athens, and not interrupt with first one remark and then another; is there anyone who does not believe in the existence of horses, but believes in that of things pertaining to horses? or who does not believe in flute-players, but believes in flute-playing? There is not, best of men. If you do not wish to give the answer, I tell it to you and everyone else here. But at least answer the next question. Is there anyone who believes in divine things, 27 C
and does not believe in divinities? 'There is not.' [2]How obliging of you to answer at last, on being compelled by the judges. Well then, you say that I believe in and teach the existence of divine things, whether new or old; then at all events I believe in divine things according to your statement; moreover you swore this in your deposition. But if I believe in divine things, I suppose it is an absolute necessity that I should believe in divinities. Is not this so? Of course it is; I set you down as admitting that, as you do not answer. But do we not consider that divinities are either gods or children 27 D

[1] τῷ εἰωθότι τρόπῳ: *i.e.*, my usual method of examination.

[2] ὡς ὄνησας: lit. 'how you benefited me,' *i.e.*, when you answered.

of gods? Yes or no? 'Certainly, yes.' Well then, if I do believe in divinities as you say I do, if indeed divinities are gods of some kind, this would be that about which I say that you are making riddles and jesting, saying that I, while not believing in the gods, do again on the contrary believe in them, inasmuch as I do at least believe in divinities; but if again divinities are, as it were, illegitimate children of gods, either by nymphs or some other mothers, whose children in fact they are said to be, who amongst men would believe that children of gods exist, but that gods do not? For it would be just as absurd as if anyone were to believe in the
27 E offspring of horses or likewise of asses [mules], but were not to believe in the existence of horses and asses. But, Meletus, [1]you must herein surely have been making trial of me when you brought this indictment, or have been in doubt as to what genuine misdeed you should lay to my charge; but that you should persuade any man who has even the smallest intelligence [2]that it is (not) possible for the same man to believe in both divine things and things of the gods, and on the other hand possible for the

[1] οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως .. οὐχὶ = 'There is no (possibility) how (you did) not,' *i.e.*, 'you must have.'

[2] ὡς οὐ τοῦ αὐτοῦ. The 'not' (οὐ) is bracketed as being merely an expression of the negative idea in the sentence. If translated, it certainly does not seem to give the sense required by the argument. τοῦ αὐτοῦ = 'characteristic of the same man.'

same man to believe in neither divinities nor 28
gods nor heroes, [1]is quite inconceivable.

XVI. But in truth, men of Athens, to show that I am not indeed guilty according to Meletus' indictment, [2]does not seem to me to require a long defence, but even [3]this is sufficient; but as to that which I said in my foregoing remarks also, that there has arisen against me a great and [4]widespread enmity, be well assured that it is true; and this is what will convict me, [5]if anything does, not Meletus nor Anytus, but the prejudice and spite of the multitude; which have in fact convicted many other good men too, and, I fancy, also will convict them; there is no fear of their stopping short at me. 28

Well, perhaps someone might say, 'What, Socrates! are you not ashamed of having followed such a pursuit, one from which you are now in danger of death?' But I could give this man a just reply, 'You say not well, my friend, if you think that a man [6]who is worth anything however little ought to take account of chances

[1] οὐδαμῶς, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'There is no device how (ὅπως) you should persuade;' *i.e.*, 'it is quite impossible that you should persuade.'

[2] οὐ πολλῆς ... ὡς: lit. 'it is not (a matter) of much defence that.'

[3] ταῦτα: *i.e.*, what I have said.

[4] πρὸς πολλούς: lit. 'in relation to many.'

[5] ἐάνπερ ἁλῷ: lit. 'if it convicts me.'

[6] ὅτου τι καὶ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'of whom there is any even a little worth.'

of life or death, and not to look, when he acts, to this alone, whether he is doing what is just or what is unjust, the deeds of a good man or of a bad man. For base indeed, in your esteem at
28 c least, would be all those demigods who died at Troy, the son of Thetis [1]above all, who thought so little of danger compared with enduring a disgrace, that when his mother, who was a goddess, spoke to him while he was burning to slay Hector, in some such words as these, I believe, 'My son, if thou shalt avenge the death of thy friend Patroclus and slay Hector, thou thyself wilt die; for in truth straightway after Hector is thy doom ready.' So she spoke; but he, hearing this, made light of death and of
28 d danger, and fearing much more to live a coward and not to avenge his friends, replied, 'Straightway may I die, having requited the evil-doer, that I may not remain here laughed to scorn beside the beaked ships, a cumberer of the ground.' Do you suppose that he cared for death and danger? For so, in truth, it is, men of Athens. Wherever a man stations himself [either] believing it to be best or is stationed by a commander, there he ought, as I think, to remain and face the danger, taking no account of anything either of death or anything else before disgrace.

XVII. Therefore, men of Athens, I should be

[1] οἵ τε ἄλλοι καί: lit. 'both the rest and,' which, by a common idiom, = 'especially,' 'above all.'

one who has done strange things, if, when the commanders whom you chose to command me 28 e
assigned to me my post both at [1]Potidæa and at Amphipolis and at Delium, I then indeed remained at the post which they assigned like any other man and ran the risk of death, but when the god assigned to me, as I both believed and understood, the duty of spending my life in philosophy and in examining myself and everyone else, in that case I were to take fright at death or any other thing whatever and desert my post. 29 a
Strange indeed would it be, and then in truth anyone might justly bring me into court for not believing in gods, [2]for I should be disobeying the oracle and fearing death and thinking myself to be wise, when I was not. For to fear death, men of Athens, is nothing else than to think one is wise, when one is not, for it is to think one knows what one does not know. [3]For indeed no one knows whether death happens to be even the greatest of all blessings to man, but men fear it as though they knew well that it was the greatest of evils. [4]And this is surely that 29 b
reprehensible ignorance, that of thinking one knows what one does not know. And in this point, men of Athens, I am here too perhaps

[1] Ποτιδαίᾳ: Introduction, IV.

[2] ἀναιθὲν is explanatory of δικαίως κ.τ.λ.

[3] οἶδε μὲν γὰρ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'For indeed no one knows death, not even whether,' etc.

[4] πῶς οὐκ ... ἐστὶν: lit. 'how is it not?' i.e., 'surely it is.'

better than most men, and if I were really to say that I am wiser than anyone in anything, it would be in this, that not having full knowledge about matters in Hades, so also I think that I do not know; but to do wrong and to disobey my superior, be he god or man, I know to be evil and base. Sooner then than the evils which I know to be evils, I will never fear nor shun things as to which I know not whether they may happen to be good. And so, not even if
29 C you now acquit me, disbelieving Anytus, who said that either I ought not to have come in here in the first instance, or, as I had come in, it was impossible not to put me to death, telling you that, if I should escape, straightway would your sons, practising what Socrates teaches, all be utterly corrupted,—if you were to say to me with regard to this, 'Socrates, this time we will not listen to Anytus, and we acquit you, on this condition however, on condition that you no longer continue in this research nor pursue philosophy; but if you are caught doing this
9 D again, you shall die'; if then, as I said, you were to acquit me on these terms, I should say to you, 'Men of Athens, [1]I honour and love you, but I shall obey the god rather than you, and as long as I breathe and have strength, never will I cease from pursuing philosophy and both exhorting you and demonstrating to whom-

[1] ἀσπάζομαι, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'I embrace and kiss you.'

soever of you I may at any time meet, saying the kind of things that I am wont to say, "Best of men, you are a citizen of Athens, the greatest and most glorious city in wisdom and power, and are you not ashamed of caring for money, that you shall have as much as possible, and for reputation and honour, whilst for wisdom 29 E and truth and the soul, that it shall be as good as possible, you do not care nor take thought?"' And if one of you disputes my words and says that he does care, I shall not at once release him nor depart, but I shall question and cross-question and refute him, and if he seems to me not to possess virtue, but to say that he does, I shall reproach him, because he sets least value on that which is worth most, and sets more 30 A value on that which is worth less. These things will I do to whomsoever I meet, be he young or old, citizen or stranger, but especially to you citizens, inasmuch as you are nearer to me by birth. For, know well, the god commands this. And I think that no greater blessing yet befell you in the State than my service of the god. For I go about doing naught else than persuading both the younger and older of you to care neither for your bodies nor your money sooner than, or so earnestly as, for the soul, that it may be as 30 B excellent as possible, telling you that virtue does not come from money, but that money and all other blessings that men have, both in private and in public, come from virtue. Well,

if I corrupt the young by saying this, [1] that would be mischievous indeed. But if anyone declares that I say anything other than this, he is wrong. With regard to this, I would say, 'Men of Athens, either take Anytus' advice or do not, and either acquit me or do not acquit me, [2] for I
30 C shall not act otherwise, not even if I have to die many times.'

XVIII. Do not interrupt me, men of Athens, but pray abide by that which I requested of you, not to murmur at what I say, but to listen; indeed you will, as I think, derive benefit from listening; for I am in fact about to tell you certain other things also, at which perhaps you will raise a clamour; but on no account do this. For, be well assured, if you put me to death being such a man as I say I am, you will not be doing so much harm to me as to yourselves. For neither Meletus nor Anytus would do me any harm. In fact he would not have the
30 D power; for I do not think that a better man may be harmed by a worse. He might however kill me perhaps or banish me or disgrace me. And he, perhaps, and possibly others, think these things great evils; I however do not think them so, but much more to do what he is now doing, to try to put a man to death unjustly.

[1] ταῦτ' refers not merely to the preceding ταῦτα, but to the whole clause, *εἰ μέν ... νέους*.

[2] ὡς ἄρα ἄλλως. The meaning is, 'Whatever you do, you will do it on the understanding that (ὡς) I shall not change my course.'

Now therefore, men of Athens, I am far from making a defence for my own sake, as one might suppose, but for yours, lest by condemning me you should at all offend with respect to the god's gift to you. For if you put me to death, you 30 B
will not easily find such another, one who literally, though it may be a somewhat ridiculous thing to say, is attached by the god to the State, as if to a horse which is great indeed and noble, but somewhat sluggish from its size and requiring to be roused by some gadfly; [1] and as such, I think, has the god attached me to the State, being such an one as I am, who, rousing and persuading and reproaching each one of you, never cease settling upon you at every 31 A
point the whole day long; another such man then will not easily be found for you, men of Athens, but if you take my advice, you will spare me. But you perhaps being vexed, like those who while napping are awakened, [2] might strike me, and, yielding to Anytus, might thoughtlessly kill me, then you might go to sleep and so continue for the rest of your lives, unless the god, caring for you, should send upon you some other. But that I happen to be such as to have been given by the god to the State, you might

[1] οἷον δή, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'of which kind the god seems to me to have attached me to the State.' οἷον agrees with ἐμέ.

[2] κροῦσαντες ἄν: lit. 'having struck.' The ἄν, which belongs to ἀποκτείναιτε, is repeated with the participle in order to give warning that the sentence will be conditional.

31 B discern from this; it is not like human nature that I have neglected all my own affairs and have now for so many years suffered my private interests to be neglected, whereas I am always doing your business, going to each man separately and, like a father or an elder brother, persuading him to care for virtue. And certainly, if I had been deriving any profit from this, [1]and had received payment for these exhortations, I should have had some reason for my conduct; but as it is you see of course yourselves, that my accusers, while in all else accusing me so shamelessly, could not at any rate [2]have
31 C the effrontery to produce a witness and say that I ever either exacted or requested any payment. For sufficient, I think, is the witness I produce that I speak the truth,—my poverty.

XIX. Now perhaps it might appear to be strange that I do indeed give this advice in private, going about and being very busy, whereas I do not venture to come forward in public before your assembly and give advice to the State. But the reason of this is what you have often heard me say in many places, that there comes to me [3]something from the gods
31 D and divine [a voice], [4]which, as you know,

[1] καὶ μισθὸν, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'and receiving pay exhorted these things.' See note on ᾧ δὴ καὶ πιστεύων (19 A).

[2] ἀναισχυντῆσαι, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'to have the effrontery to say, having produced a witness, that I.'

[3] δαίμόν τι: Introduction, II.

[4] ὃ δὴ καὶ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'which of course Meletus caricaturing

Meletus caricatured in his indictment, when he drew it up. But I have had this, beginning from my childhood, a kind of voice coming to me, which when it comes always diverts me from that which I am about to do, but never urges me on; this it is which opposes my taking part in politics; for, be well assured, men of Athens, [1]if I had [long ago] attempted to take part in political affairs, I should [as] long ago [2]have perished and have done no good either to 31 E
you or to myself. And be not angry with me when I tell you the truth; there is no man who will preserve his life while honestly opposing either you or any other multitude and preventing many unjust and unlawful things being done in the State, but it is necessary that he who will really 32 A
fight for what is just, if he is to preserve his life even for a short time, should be a private citizen and not a public man.

XX. And I will give you strong proofs of this, not words, but, what you value, deeds. Listen then to what has happened to me, in order that you may know that I would not through fear of death yield to any man contrary to what is just,

in his indictment, drew it up.' ὃ is object of ἐπικωμῳδῶν. Supply γραφὴν with ἐγράψατο. Meletus had made fun of the divine sign, and in speaking of ἕτερα καινὰ δαιμόνια had unfairly treated it as a personal deity, whereas Socrates clearly regarded it as simply a medium of divine revelation.

[1] εἰ ἐγὼ ἐπεχείρησα, κ.τ.λ.: Introduction, III.

[2] ἀπολώλη = ἀπολώλειν, pluperfect.

[1]but that, if I did not yield at once, I should also at once be likely to perish. What I shall tell you will be [2]commonplace and forensic, yet true.
32 B For I, men of Athens, never yet held any office in the State, but once I was a senator; and our tribe [Antiochis] happened to be [3]presiding, when you wished to judge in a body [4]the ten generals who did not rescue their men after the sea-fight, [5]illegally, as afterwards you all came to think. On that occasion I alone of all the presidents opposed [your] doing anything contrary to the laws, [and gave my vote against you]; and when the speakers were ready to denounce and arrest me, and you were urging them on

[1] **μὴ ὑπείκων δέ, κ.τ.λ.** The first ἅμα goes with ὑπείκων, the second with ἀπολοίμην: lit. 'not yielding (*i.e.*, if I were not to yield) at once, I should also at once be likely to perish.'

[2] **φορτικὰ, κ.τ.λ.**: *an apology for introducing the recital of* his services to the State. Such recitals formed a recognised passage in a defendant's speech.

[3] **πρυτανεύουσα.** The Senate (or βουλή) consisted of 500 members, *i.e.*, fifty elected by lot from each of the ten tribes. The Prytany (or presidency) was held by each tribe of fifty members, called πρυτάνεις, in rotation for periods of thirty-five days. One of their number was elected each day as supreme president for that day only. He was called the Epistates. It appears that Socrates was Epistates on the occasion here mentioned. Introduction, III.

[4] **τοὺς δέκα στρατηγούς.** This is not strictly correct. Only eight of the ten generals were present at the battle, and two of these, when recalled, refused to comply.

[5] **παρανόμως.** The proposal of Callixenus to take a collective verdict was unconstitutional, because in opposition to a statute known as the Καννώνου ψήφισμα, which provided that it should be illegal to vote on two or more accused persons at once,

and shouting, I thought I ought rather to face 32 C
the danger out on the side of the law and justice than, through fear of imprisonment or death, to side with you who were meditating an unjust course. And that was while the State was still a democracy. But again when it became [1]an oligarchy, the Thirty, having sent for me and four others to come to the [2]Rotunda, ordered us to bring [3]Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, that he might be put to death; and, as you know, they gave many such orders to many others, wishing to contaminate with guilt as many as they could. Then however I again showed not in word, but in deed, that for death 32 D
indeed,—if the expression be not too rude,—I do not care a jot, but as to doing nothing unjust or unholy, that is all my care. For I was not so terrified by that government, strong as it was, as to commit an unjust action, but when we came out from the Rotunda, the four indeed went to Salamis and brought Leon, but I departed and went home. And perhaps I should have suffered death for this, if [4]the government

[1] **ὀλιγαρχία**: *i.e.*, the rule of The Thirty, established by Lysander in 404 B.C. after the subjugation of Athens by the Lacedæmonians. See note on τὴν φυγὴν ταύτην, 21 A.

[2] **θόλου.** The Tholus (or Rotunda) was a dome-shaped building which served as a dining-hall of the Prytanes and, while they lasted, of The Thirty.

[3] **Λέοντα.** Leon, a wealthy citizen, had fled to Salamis to avoid The Thirty.

[4] **ἡ ἀρχή**: *i.e.*, the government of The Thirty,—which lasted only eight months.

had not speedily been overthrown; and of this
32 E you will have many witnesses.

XXI. Do you then suppose that I should have survived for so many years, if I had taken part in public affairs, and, acting in a manner worthy of a good man, had supported what was just, and had, as I ought, set the highest value on that? Far from it, men of Athens; nor in fact
33 A would any other man. But I throughout my life, if I did anything anywhere in public, shall be found to have been a man of this kind, and in private also the same, one who never yet has yielded to any man in anything contrary to what is just either to any other or to one of these, who those who slander me say are my disciples. [1]I however never yet became any man's teacher; but, if anyone desires to hear me speaking and doing my own work, whether he be young or old, I never grudged it to anyone. Neither do
33 B I converse only if I receive payment, and not if I receive none, but I offer myself to rich and poor alike to ask me questions and to anyone who wishes to answer and hear what I have to say. And for these, whether anyone turns out a good man or not, [2]I should not justly incur the responsibility, to none of whom I ever yet either promised any instruction or taught them.

[1] ἐγὼ δὲ διδάσκαλος: Introduction, V.

[2] οὐκ ἂν δικαίως, κ.τ.λ. The misconduct of Critias and Alcibiades, who had been Socrates' followers, was often laid to his charge. Introduction, VII.

And if anyone says that he has ever yet learnt or heard from me in private anything which everyone else did not also hear, be well assured that he is not speaking the truth.

XXII. But why really do some delight in spending much time with me? You have heard, 33
men of Athens; I told you the whole truth, that, hearing they take delight in the examination of those who think they are wise, but are not; [1]for that is somewhat amusing. And this, as I say, [2]has been assigned to me by the god to do, both by oracles and by dreams and in every way in which any other divine decree also ever assigned anything whatever to a man to do. This, men of Athens, is both true and easy to prove. For if I am in fact corrupting some of the young, and have corrupted others, they surely 33
ought, if any of them when they grew older had found out that I ever gave them any bad advice when they were young, to have come forward now and accused me and taken their revenge; but if they themselves were unwilling, some of their kinsmen, fathers or brothers or other relatives, if their kinsmen had suffered any evil from me, should have remembered it now [and taken their revenge]. And certainly many of them are present here, whom I see; first, there is [3]Crito,

[1] ἔστι γὰρ, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'for it is not unpleasant.'

[2] προστέτακται: Introduction, I.

[3] Κρίτων, κ.τ.λ. Crito was intensely devoted to Socrates. He attended him in his last moments, and received his last

of the same age and deme as myself, father of Critobulus here; then Lysanias of Sphettus, father of Æschines here; again, here is Antiphon of Cephisus, father of Epigenes. Here are those others besides, whose brothers have engaged in this occupation of mine, Nicostratus, the son of Theozotides, brother of Theodotus,—Theodotus indeed is dead, so that he at least could not try to influence him,—and here is Paralus, the son of Demodocus, whose brother was Theages. And Adeimantus, the son of Ariston, whose brother is [1]Plato here, and Æantodorus, whose brother is Apollodorus here. And I could mention to you many others, of whom Meletus ought certainly to have called some one as a witness in the course of his own speech; but if he forgot then, let him call one now,—[2]I give him my place,—and let him speak, if he has any such evidence. But quite contrary to this, men of Athens, you will find them all ready to support me, who corrupt, who work evil against their kinsmen, as Meletus and Anytus declare. For

commands. He was a rich man, and not only offered at the trial (38 B) to become Socrates' surety, but when Socrates was in prison he was ready to place his wealth at his friend's disposal and provide him with the means of escape from Athens. Apollodorus, Critobulus, Epigenes and Æschines were also present at Socrates' death. Apollodorus is specially mentioned as having been overcome by grief on that occasion.

[1] Πλάτων. This is one of the very few passages in the works of Plato in which he mentions himself.

[2] ἐγὼ παραχωρῶ: *i.e.*, 'I yield to him the βῆμα.'

those who themselves have been corrupted would perhaps have some reason for supporting me; but those who are uncorrupted, men now advanced in years, the relations of these, what other reason have they for supporting me except the right and just reason, that they are conscious that Meletus is lying, but that I am speaking the truth?

XXIII. Very well, men of Athens; the things which I might have to say in my defence are pretty much these and others perhaps of the same kind. But perhaps someone among you might be displeased on remembering his own case, if he indeed, when contesting a suit even less important than this, both implored and besought the judges with many tears, having brought before the court not only his own children, in order that he might be pitied as much as possible, but also many of his relations and friends besides, whereas I, it appears, will do none of these things, and that too when, as it seems, I am in the extremity of danger. Perhaps then someone, having reflected upon this, might become more remorseless towards me, and being angered for these very reasons, might give his vote in anger. Now if anyone among you is in this state of mind,—I do not assume that he is; but if he is, I think that I should say what is reasonable in answer to him, if I said, 'Best of men, I perhaps have some kinsmen too.' In fact, to use that saying of Homer, 'Neither am I born of oak or rock,' but of man; and so I

[redacted]

also have kinsmen and I have sons, men of Athens, three sons, one now a youth and two still children. But yet I shall not bring any of them forward here and implore you to acquit me. Now why is it that I shall do none of these things? [1]Not out of obstinacy, men of
34 B Athens, nor out of disrespect to you, but whether or not I am undaunted in the face of death, is another question; at any rate both for my own credit and yours and that of the State as a whole, it does not seem to me to be honourable that I should do any of these things, both as being of such an age and as bearing [2]this name, whether it be true or a lie; but at least it has been decided that Socrates is in some respect
35 A superior to the multitude. If therefore those of you who are thought to be superior whether in wisdom or courage or any other virtue whatsoever, [3]shall be men of this kind, it would be disgraceful; the kind, I mean, of which I have often seen some, when they are brought to trial, men considered to be somewhat, but making marvellous efforts, as imagining that they would suffer a terrible thing, if they were put to death, as though they would be immortal, if you did not kill them; and these seem to me to fasten

[1] οὐκ ἀθαδιζόμενος, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'not being obstinate nor dishonouring you.'

[2] τοῦτο τοὔνομα: *i.e.*, the name of 'wise.'

[3] τοιοῦτοι ἔσονται = 'are going to behave like this,' *i.e.*, bringing their wives and children into court in order to excite pity.

discredit on the State, so that any stranger too might suppose that those of the Athenians who excel in virtue, those whom they themselves select in preference [1]to themselves both in the magistracies and in the other posts of honour,— 35 B
these are in naught superior to women. For, men of Athens, neither ought we who are thought to be even anything whatever to do these things, nor if we do them, ought you to allow it, but you should show this very thing, that you will much rather condemn the man who introduces these pitiful stage-effects and makes the State ridiculous than him who remains quiet.

XXIV. But apart from reputation, men of Athens, it does not seem to me to be just either, to entreat a judge nor by entreating to gain 35 C
acquittal, but to inform and persuade him. For it is not for this that a judge sits,—for dispensing justice by favour, but for giving judgment [2]thereupon; and [3]he has sworn not to favour whomsoever he pleases, but to judge according to the laws. It is therefore neither right that we should accustom you to perjure yourselves nor that you should become accustomed so to do; for neither of us would be acting with piety.

[1] ἑαυτῶν: genitive after προκρίνουσιν.

[2] ταῦτα: *i.e.*, τὰ δίκαια.

[3] ὀμώμοκεν. Every judge of the Heliæa on entering office had to take an oath,—'I will vote according to the laws and decrees of the Athenian people,' etc.

Do not therefore deem it right that I should do towards you such things as I consider neither
35 D honourable nor just nor holy,—yes, by Zeus, in all cases and especially now, when I am being accused of impiety by Meletus here. For if I were to persuade you and by entreating were to put constraint upon you when you had taken an oath, I should clearly be teaching you not to believe that there are gods, and while making my defence, should literally be accusing myself of not believing in gods. But this is far from being the case; for I believe, men of Athens, as none of my accusers do, and I leave it to you and the god to judge concerning me in whatever way
5 E is destined to be best both for me and for you.

XXV. That I am not vexed, men of Athens, at this which has happened, that you have
3 A condemned me, both many other things contribute to bring about, and especially this,—that what has happened has not happened contrary to my expectation, but much more do I wonder at the resulting number of the votes on each side. For I at least did not imagine that it would be by so little, but by much; but as it is, apparently, if only [1]thirty of the votes had

[1] τριάκοντα. Socrates gives 30 as a round number. Strictly, the number would be 31. There were probably 501 judges,—
2 281 for, and 220 against, the verdict. Transfer 31 votes, and the numbers on each side are 250 and 251,—a majority of one in Socrates' favour.

changed their side, I should have been acquitted. [1]As against Meletus indeed, I think, I have even as it is gained an acquittal, and not only have I gained an acquittal, but this at least is clear to everyone, that if Anytus and Lycon had not come forward to accuse me, he would even have been fined [2]a thousand drachmæ, for not having 36 B obtained the fifth part of the votes.

XXVI. So the man assesses the penalty at death. Very well. But at what would you have me set the counter-assessment, men of Athens? Evidently [3]at my deserts, would you not? What then shall I say? What do I deserve to suffer or to pay, [4]because during my life I did not remain quiet, but having neglected what most men care for, money-making and domestic affairs and military appointments and popular oratory and also all the offices and clubs and factions which exist in the State, thinking myself to be in reality too honest to enter upon these and yet preserve my life, so I did not 36 C indeed enter [5]on that, by entering on which I

[1] Μέλητον ... ἀποφέυγα: lit. 'I have escaped Meletus.'

[2] χιλίας δραχμάς. According to a law enacted to prevent vexatious prosecutions, a prosecutor who did not succeed in obtaining one-fifth of the votes was fined 1,000 drachmæ, and deprived of his right to prefer a similar indictment at any future time.

[3] τῆς ἀξίας. In an ἀγὼν τιμητός the penalty, not being settled by statute, was determined by the court. But the prosecutor and the accused were first called upon to propose such a penalty as they thought fit (κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν).

[4] ὅ τι μαθὼν is equivalent to an emphatic 'because.'

[5] ἐνταῦθα ... οἱ: lit. 'there ... whither.'

XXVII. Now perhaps in saying this also, I seem to speak in much the same way as about lamentations and entreaty, speaking presumptuously; but the case is not, men of Athens, like that, but rather like this. I am convinced that I never wronged any man intentionally, but I do not convince you of this; for it is but a short time that we have conversed with one another; or else, as I believe, if you had a law, as [1]other men have, not to decide a capital case in a single day only, but in many, 37 b
you would have been convinced. But, as it is, to clear away gross calumnies in a short time is no easy matter. Convinced then as I am that I have wronged no man, I am far from likely to wrong myself and to declare against myself that I am worthy of any evil and to assess the penalty for myself at something of this kind. Through fear of what? Is it lest I should suffer that which Meletus assesses for me, as to which I say I know not either if it is good or if it is evil? Instead of this then am I to choose what I well know are evils, assessing it at this? At imprisonment? And why should I live in a 37 c
prison, a slave to the [2]magistracy appointed from time to time [the Eleven]? Or at a fine

[1] ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις: *e.g.* the Spartans.

[2] ἀρχῇ: *i.e.*, the Eleven. This was a board consisting of ten members chosen annually by lot (one from each of the ten tribes), and a clerk. They were responsible for the care of the prisons and for executions.

and to be imprisoned until I have paid it? But for me that is the same as what I mentioned just now; for I have no money, [1]from which to pay. Then am I to assess it at exile? For perhaps you would assess it at this for me. A great love of life would indeed possess me, if I were to be so devoid of reason as not to be able to infer, that you indeed being my fellow-citizens became
7 D unable to bear my occupations and my discourses, and they have become burdensome and odious to you, so that you are now seeking to be released from them, whereas others of course will bear them cheerfully. Far from it, men of Athens; a fine life indeed would it be for a man of my age, having gone into exile, to live changing from one city to another and being expelled. For I know well that, wherever I go, the young will listen to me discoursing, as they do here; and, if I drive them away, they will themselves expel me, persuading their elders; but if I do
7 E not drive them away, their fathers and kinsmen will expel me [2]for their sakes.

XXVIII. Perhaps then someone would say, 'But will you not be able, Socrates, having gone into exile, to live being silent and remaining quiet?' It is just this, of which it is the hardest of all to convince some of you. For if on the one hand I say that this is to disobey the god and that for this reason it is impossible to remain

[1] ὅπόθεν ἐκτίσω: lit. 'whence I shall pay.'
[2] ἀ' αὐτοὺς τούτους: lit. 'on account of these themselves.'

quiet, you will not believe me, thinking that I am dissembling; or if on the other hand I say 38 A
that this happens also to be a very great blessing to a man, to discourse each day on virtue and the other matters, about which you hear me conversing and examining myself and others, and that [1]an unexamined life is not worth living, when I say this still less will you believe me. The facts are indeed as I say, men of Athens, but to convince you is no easy matter. And at the same time I have not been accustomed to deem myself deserving of any evil. If indeed I had money, I should have assessed the penalty at a fine of as much as I was 38 B
expected to pay; for I should have suffered no harm; [2]but as it is,—for I have none, unless of course you wish to assess it for me at as much as I should be able to pay. And perhaps I should have been able to pay you a mina of silver; at so much then I assess it. But Plato here, men of Athens, and Crito and Critobulus and Apollodorus tell me to assess it at thirty minæ, and that they themselves are my sureties; so I assess it at so much. And these will be trustworthy sureties to you for the money. 38 C

XXIX. It is not for the sake of much time, men of Athens, that you will have the name and

[1] ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος, κ.τ.λ.: Introduction, V.
[2] νῦν δέ. After νῦν δέ understand 'I cannot.'

the blame from those who wish to defame the
f State, of having put to death Socrates, a wise
man. For they who wish to reproach you will
say indeed that I am wise, even although I am
not. Now if you had waited for a short time,
[1]this would have happened for you of its own
accord; for you surely observe my age, that it is
already far on in life, and nigh to death. And I
D say this not to you all, but to those who have
condemned me to death. And to these very
men I say this also. Perhaps you think, men of
Athens, that I have been convicted through
deficiency of the kind of argument, by which I
should have convinced you, had I thought it
right to do and to say anything, so as to be
acquitted. Far from it. I have indeed been
convicted through deficiency, not however of
arguments, but of audacity and impudence and
the will to utter before you such things as would
have been most pleasant to you to hear,
namely me both wailing and lamenting and
E doing and saying many other things, which, as
I say, are unworthy of me; such things in fact
as you have been accustomed to hear from other
men. But neither [2]then did I think that I ought
because of the danger to do any slavish action,
nor now do I repent of having thus made my
defence, but much rather do I prefer to have
made my defence in this way and to die than to

[1] τοῦτο: *i.e.*, my death.
[2] τότε: *i.e.*, in making my defence.

have made it [1]in that way and to live; for neither
in a lawsuit nor in war ought I or any other
person to contrive this, how [2]by using any 8
means he shall avoid death. And in fact it
often becomes evident in battles that a man
might escape, at least from death, by laying
down his arms and turning to supplication of
his pursuers; and there are many devices in
every danger so as to escape death, if a man will
venture to do and say anything. [3]But this, I
think, may not be difficult, men of Athens, to
escape death, but it is far more difficult to
escape wickedness; for it runs swifter than
death. And now I, inasmuch as I am slow and 8
old, have been overtaken by the slower, but my
accusers, inasmuch as they are clever and swift,
have been overtaken by the swifter, wickedness.
And now I indeed shall depart, [4]having been con-
demned by you to death, but these, [5]having been
condemned by truth to depravity and injustice.
And I abide by the assessment and so do they.
Perhaps it was necessary too that these things
should so befall, and I think that they are fair.

[1] ἐκείνως. Understand ἀπολογησάμενος.
[2] πᾶν ποιῶν: lit. 'doing everything,' *i.e.*, going any lengths.
[3] μὴ οὐ ... ᾖ. Before μὴ supply φοβοῦμαι or some such word. 'I fear lest' = 'I am inclined to think,' 'perhaps.'
[4] δίκην ὄφλων: lit. 'having incurred a penalty.'
[5] ὀφληκότες ... ἀδικίαν. According to Socrates, injustice would in itself be a penalty. See, for instance, 30 D, where he says that death, exile, or public disgrace are not evils at all as compared to the evil of putting a man to death unjustly.

XXX. In the next place I desire to prophesy
39 c to you who have condemned me; for I am in fact now in that case in which men most do prophesy,—when they are about to die. Men of Athens, I tell you, who have put me to death, that straightway after my death a punishment will come upon you far more severe, by Zeus, than that with which you have put me to death; for now you have done this, thinking you would be released from giving an account of your lives. But, I tell you, the case will turn out for you far otherwise. Those who call you to account will be more numerous, whom I have
39 D now restrained, though you did not perceive it; and they will be more severe inasmuch as they are younger and you will be more vexed. For if you imagine that by putting men to death you will stop anyone from reproaching you for not living rightly, [1]you are mistaken; for that method of escape is neither altogether possible nor honourable, but this is both very honourable and very easy, not to suppress other men, but to prepare one's self to be as good as possible. Having then prophesied this to you who have voted against me, I take my leave of
39 E you.

XXXI. But with you who have voted for my acquittal I would gladly converse about this thing which has come to pass, [2]while [3]the

[1] οὐκ ὀρθῶς, κ.τ.λ. : lit. 'you do not think rightly.'
[2] ἐν ᾧ = ἐν χρόνῳ, ἐν ᾧ. [3] οἱ ἄρχοντες : *i.e.*, the Eleven.

magistrates are busy, and while yet I do not go to the place where I must go and die. Stay here with me then, men of Athens, so long. For nothing hinders our talking with one another, while we may. For I wish to explain 40 A
to you, as being my friends, what may be the meaning of that which has now befallen me. To me, my judges,—for in calling you judges I should call you rightly,—a marvellous thing has happened. For my customary prophetic voice, [1]that of the divinity, in all the former time was on all occasions quite constant, opposing me even in quite trifling matters, if in aught I were not going to [2]act rightly; but now that has happened to me which you yourselves also see, which anyone might surely suppose, and which is considered, to be the extreme of evil. Yet neither when in the morning I was leaving my house did the sign of the god oppose me, nor 40 B
when I was coming up here [before the court], nor anywhere in my speech when I was about to say anything; and yet in other discourses it has at many points checked me in the midst of speaking. But now it has nowhere in this matter opposed me either in any deed or word. What then do I conceive to be the reason of this? I will tell you; it is probable that this which has

[1] ἡ τοῦ δαιμονίου. *Cf.* 31 D; Introduction, II.
[2] ὀρθῶς πράξειν. ὀρθῶς here = 'rightly' in the sense of 'expediently.' So also below (40 C) ἀγαθὸν πράξειν = not 'to do a good action,' but 'to produce a good result.'

happened has been a good thing for me, and it cannot be that we conceive rightly, as many of
40 c us as suppose that to die is an evil. Surely a great proof of this has arisen; for it is not possible that the accustomed sign would have failed to oppose me, if I had not been about to achieve some good.

XXXII. And let us consider in this way also, that there is much hope that it is a good thing. For to die is one of two things; either it is such that the dead man is nothing and has no sensation of anything, or, according to what men say, it happens to be a kind of change and migration of the soul from the present abode into another. And [1]if on the one hand there is no sensation,
40 d but something like a sleep wherein one sleeping sees not even a dream, death would be a marvellous gain. For I think that if a man had to select that night in which he slept so soundly that he did not even see a dream, and, having compared with this night all the other nights and days of his life, had to reflect and say how many days and nights in his life he had spent better and more pleasantly than this night, I think that not only a private person, but even [2]the great king
40 e himself would find these easy to count compared with the other days and nights. If then death

[1] εἴτε. The other alternative supposition is introduced by εἰ δ' αὖ (40 E).

[2] τὸν μέγαν βασιλέα. To the Greeks the King of Persia was always the type of all earthly happiness.

is such as this, I for my part count it a gain. For in fact all time [1]thus appears to be nothing more than a single night. But if on the other hand death is like going a journey from here to another place, and what is said is true, namely that all the dead are there, what greater blessing could there be than this, my judges? For if anyone, having arrived at Hades, delivered from these who profess to be judges, shall find 41
those who truly are judges, who are also said to give judgment there, [2]Minos and Rhadamanthus and Æacus and [3]Triptolemus, and such others of the demigods as were just in their lives, would the journey be worthless? Or again, how much would any of you give to associate with [4]Orpheus and Musæus and Hesiod and Homer? I indeed am willing to die many times, if these things are true; for to myself especially the sojourn there would be admirable, when I should meet with [5]Palamedes and 41

[1] οὕτω δή = 'when thus regarded.'

[2] Μίνως, κ.τ.λ. Plato elsewhere names Minos, Rhadamanthus and Æacus as judges in Hades; but the last mentioned is not styled judge of the dead by any other Greek writer.

[3] Τριπτόλεμος. Triptolemus of Eleusis was regarded by the Athenians as the founder of agriculture and as the first lawgiver. He does not appear elsewhere as a judge of the dead.

[4] Ὀρφεύς. Orpheus and Musæus were the great mythical poets and singers of Greece. Their names were associated with mysteries, and many books and doctrines were ascribed to them.

[5] Παλαμήδα. Odysseus is said to have forged a letter from Priam, and to have caused this to be delivered to Palamedes,

[1]Ajax the son of Telamon, and any other of the ancients who has died through an unjust judgment, and [2]for me to compare my own sufferings with theirs would, as I think, be not unpleasant; and, the greatest thing of all, to spend my time questioning and making inquiry of those who are there, as of those here, to see which of them is wise and which thinks that he is, but is not. And how much, my judges, would anyone give to question him who led
41 c the great army against Troy, or Odysseus or Sisyphus or ten thousand others one might mention, both men and women? To converse with whom and to be with them and question them would be an infinite degree of happiness. There, I suppose, they certainly do not put men to death for this; [3]for those that are there are not only happier in all else than those that are here, but are now and for ever immortal, if at least what is said is true.

XXXIII. But you also, my judges, ought to be of good cheer with respect to death and to

who was thereupon stoned to death as a traitor by the Greek army.

[1] Αἴαντα. Ajax and Odysseus disputed their claims to the arms of Hector. These were unjustly awarded to the latter, whereupon Ajax committed suicide.

[2] ἀντιπαραβάλλοντι: lit. 'for me comparing.' μοί is to be supplied.

[3] τά τε γὰρ ἄλλα, κ.τ.λ.: lit. 'for those there are happier than those here both in all other respects, and they are now for the remaining time immortal.'

contemplate this one thing as true, that for a good man there is no evil, either while living or 41 D
when dead, nor are his fortunes neglected by the gods; nor have mine now befallen me by chance, but this is clear to me, that to die now and be rid of trouble was better for me. On this account the sign nowhere turned me aside, and I for my part am hardly angry with my accusers. And yet it was not with this intention that they condemned me or accused me, but thinking to do me harm; for this they 41 E
deserve blame. Thus much however I beg of them; punish my sons when they grow up, men of Athens, troubling them in the very same way as I have troubled you, if they seem to you to care either for money or for anything else sooner than for virtue; and if they think that they are something, when they are nothing at all, reproach them, as I did you, because they care not for what they ought and think that they are something when they are worth nothing. And if you do this, I shall have re- 42 A
ceived justice at your hands, both myself and my sons. But now it is time to depart,—for me to die, for you to live. But which of us goes to the better lot, is unknown to everyone but the god.

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